DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 409 751 HE 030 214

AUTHOR	Kent, Rollin; de Vries, Wietse
TITLE	Continuity or New Directions in Mexican Higher Education?
PUB DATE	Apr 97
NOTE	10p.; Paper prepared for International Congress of the Latin American Studies Association (20th, Guadalajara, Mexico, April 17-19, 1997).
PUB TYPE	Opinion Papers (120) -- Speeches/Meeting Papers (150)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Change Agents; Educational Assessment; *Educational Change; Educational Environment; Educational Equity (Finance); *Educational Finance; *Educational Trends; Evaluation Problems; Evaluation Utilization; Foreign Countries; Governance; Government Role; *Government School Relationship; *Higher Education; Politics of Education; Public Policy; Trend Analysis
IDENTIFIERS	*Mexico; *Reform Efforts

ABSTRACT

This paper examines recent reforms in Mexican higher education identifying positive changes and continuing problems. An overview of the reforms of the 1990s shows shifts in two significant areas. First, funding has increased overall, but priorities have shifted, with funds for higher education and research increasing at a lesser rate than those for basic education. Funding rules also changed, with funds now generally targeted to specific programs rather than for general operational purposes. Second, evaluation, a concept alien to Mexican higher education, has been introduced. The paper's assessment of these reforms notes that some changes have occurred such as the increasing influence of the professoriate in evaluation and accreditation procedures, better understanding of the connection between higher education and the economy by the public and policymakers; less suspicion of educational quality and private education; and greater policy continuity underlying the reforms. The paper lists some problems that remain, with three issues considered crucial: (1) translation of desired outcomes into measurement--that is, using evaluation as a tool to steer the system; (2) revision of the system of funding with subsidies and salaries no longer allocated according to traditional patterns; (3) better definition of the rules and regulations that govern the system. (Contains 12 notes and 14 references.) (CH)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED 409 751

Rollin Kent
Departamento de Investigaciones Educativas
Centro de Invesigación y Estudioas Avanzados
San Borja 938, Colonia del Valle, México D.F. 03100
rkent@gemtel.com.mx

Wietse de Vries
Centro de Estudios Universitarios
Universidad Autónoma de Puebla
Guadalajara 23, Colonia Independencia
Puebla, México 72150
vriesnav@gemtel.com.mx

CONTINUITY OR NEW DIRECTIONS IN MEXICAN HIGHER EDUCATION?

Prepared for delivery at the XX International Congress of the Latin American Studies Association
Continental Plaza Hotel, Guadalajara, México
April 17-19, 1997

HE 030 214

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
Rollin Kent
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

1. *How to judge ongoing reform: optimism, pessimism or just plain realism?*

For a good part of the international discussion on development, Chile is the model. Reinvent government, get your incentives right, force public institutions to adapt to the market, say goodbye to comfortable budgets and stable subsidies, separate those who fund from those who execute, give the client greater power over institutional decision making. Taken together, these tenets made for a fundamental shift in outlook in how to reform public institutions. De Moura Castro says it clearly in his analysis of reform in training institutions:

> The clear tendency is to move away from the large dinosaurs of training. From the government perspective, training becomes a matter of controlling institutions by means of funds and incentives, rather than repairing and managing them through hierarchical or administrative regulation. (De Moura Castro, 1997)

From this perspective, that is from the perspective of *public sector reform*, assessing reform processes would entail looking at changes in the incentive system, degrees of privatization, and moves toward market adaptability in public institutions of higher education. It is clear, from the outset, that Chile is really the only country in Latin America that has moved its higher education system significantly in this direction. If one looks closely at higher education reforms in other countries, one finds many changes. But, judging from the pervasiveness of neoliberal discourse, it is surprising how little national policies of higher education have gone as far as Chile. Some are a mixture of timid neoliberalism and accommodations with the existing system: Mexico and Argentina might be examples of this. Others really haven't changed the basic rules of the game at all: Venezuela, Brasil, and Bolivia come to mind. Certainly, economic reforms have been much more profound than social sector reforms, including the higher education system. So, are the 90's really the decade of reform?

The Mexican collapse of 1994-95 has reignited pessimistic or at least cautionary views of the future of Latin American social reforms, after several years of neoliberal euphoria[1]. They're not saying it's not going to work; they're saying it's much tougher and complex than was previously thought. It's hard to find a neoliberal optimist these days. Others never were optimistic to begin with: the Latin American left has been saying for years that neoliberal reforms will have catastrophic consequences, and in the wake of the Chiapas insurrection it proclaimed "We told you so." Now the left is on the electoral upswing in some areas, although it is not clear whether, once in power, the left will follow radically different policies from what the neoliberals have done or whether the left actually has an alternative program of government. Almost everybody who counts on the political spectrum is looking for a way to occupy the center; some are center-right, others are center-left, but the anchor they all long for is the center.

This probably means that the Optimists vs. Pessimists debate is being superseded by a hard-realists vs. soft-realists debate: utopia is out, piece-meal change is in. If this is true -- and many will surely disagree -- one must look at the direction and the ongoing impacts of incremental reform. This perspective seems useful in an attempt to provide perspective on the reforms of the 90's in Mexican higher education.

One way of doing this is to apply TO THE CASE OF Mexico, A SET OF CRITERIA Jeffrey Puryear provides to assess the extent and depth of educational reform in Latin American educational systems (Puryear, 1996). He states that although many changes have taken place in Latin American education, governments have not faced up to the complex *political* issues in reform. He therefore puts into question whether the ongoing reforms are a significant departure from tradition. This issue is connected to the question of *state capacity* and *sustainability* of current reforms (Grindle, 1996).

Following a brief review of recent policy developments in the Mexican higher education system, we will focus on the evolving relationship between the state and higher education, as a means of assessing the direction and sustainability of the some of these reforms. Finally, we will discuss the emerging agenda for higher education.

2. An overview of reforms in the 90's[2]

Starting in 1988 and continuing until the present, government officials have developed a set of policies for reforming higher education. They covered funding, evaluation, the academic labor market, research, postgraduate training, and student admissions. Following is a discussion of changes in two fundamental areas: funding and evaluation.

Shifts in Public Funding

Between 1989 and 1994, federal funding for higher education and research increased at about 20% yearly in current dollars, and total public expenditure for education multiplied by a factor of four, going from 3.7% of GDP to 5%. In contrast to the expansionist 1970's, when higher education reaped the greatest benefit, the priority within the education sector in the 1990's has been basic education (from preschool to ninth grade): whereas federal expenditures for higher education grew threefold in current dollars between 1988 and 1994, spending for basic education increased by a factor of five.

In a period when student enrollment in higher education had not grown signifcantly for several years[3], this represented a significant stimulus, but the old *incrementalist* approach was partially modified. The growth of basic operational subsidies was kept to a minimum, whereas targeted funds for specific programs increased, covering institutional innovation, telecommunications, research projects, and productivity bonuses for professors. These funds were made available through competition based on project proposals. Public universities were also urged to diversify their sources of income. Most such institutions proceeded to raise fees and tuition rates, although on a widely varying scale (from US$50 a semester in some institutions to US$300 in others).

To what extent and in what direction did funding rules effectively change? On the one hand, clearly public universities were forced to diversify. Most of the increases in public funds were not channeled through basic subsidies, the traditional point of access, which was historically regulated by political negotiations. Although this trend is highly uneven from one institution to another, financial diversification is a significant step away from historical practice, because it points to the possibility of innovation at the level of institutional management. Since changes in internal financial priorities do not occur in a political vacuum, they have important implications for the actors and their relationships at the institutional level.

On the other hand, the external review of Mexican higher education by OECD examiners in 1996 stated flatly that they were unable to detect the actual criteria used by the federal government in funding allocations (OECD, 1996). Thus, it is impossible even today to detect equivalences across institutions in basic input or output indicators.

Recent developments reveal that the setting of clear rules of allocation and accountability is one the the most difficult areas for reform. The current administration has decided to change the allocation channels of targeted project funds: whereas previously the rector was the recipient and manager of such funds, officials have announced that now heads of department will compete for and will be held accountable for project funds. Thus, to some extent, rectors are being bypassed, and an element of accountability seems to have been introduced, with interesting implications for management change at the level of academic departments and local units. Nonetheless, the first application of this program in late 1996 does not seem to have followed the new rules, since under pressure from the rectors the government has not seriously insisted that department heads be brought into the process. Perhaps 1997 will signify stricter implementation, but in the meantime the political clout of rectors has prevailed over the intentions of federal policymakers.

Other shifts in funding are creating new issues for the public universities, the largest institutional sector of Mexican higher education.

First, the educational policy statement of the Zedillo administration[4] states that the expected renewal of student demand for higher education over the next decade will be absorbed by the two- and four-year

technological institutes of the public sector (and, implicitly, the private sector). Since enrollments in the public universities will not increase, the traditional source of institutional leverage for increasing subsidies -- that is, student numbers reported by rectors to the government -- will be further reduced.

The official policy statement also points out that funding and management of public higher education institutions will be shifted to the state governments. This would seem to be a logical continuation of decentralization which was initiated in 1992 for basic education. Implementation on this announcement has not begun, and there are no clear signs that this politically complex shift will be initiated soon. But clearly if public funds for higher education were placed in the hands of state governors, it would have serious political and administrative implications for public institutions of higher education. This is an especially sensitive issue for the public technological institutes, due to the centralized control exerted over them by the Undersecretary for Technical Education in the federal ministry, where long established power groups are extremely reluctant to relinquish their influence over a large network of over 100 institutions spread throughout Mexico. It would also raise the issue of developing a policy-making capacity at the level of state governments, where the significant resources utilized by higher education institutions might easily become a point of conflict among local power groups not necessarily interested in educational priorities.

The recent financial crisis meant restriction of federal funding for higher education and research to 1992 levels, and the spending cuts over the past two years seem to have affected higher education in greater measure than basic education, thus maintaining basic education as the priority sector. Once again, an old problem surfaces: dependence on a single source of funding makes higher education institutions especially vulnerable to the effects of federal budget instability.

The basic implication is that the public universities cannot expect significant increases in resources from the federal government in the future. This would force institutions to compete in greater measure for targeted funds and to raise resources on their own. The extent to which these lessons are being learned by insitutional management is an open question, an issue that points to the heart of the current dilemma: whereas up to now, the federal government has been the main initiator of reforms, will institutions take the initiative in reform in the future?

Evaluation and quality control

Being an alien concept to Mexican higher education, the mere mention of evaluation in the early 1990's raised the hackles of rectors, academics and union leaders, who believed it would be used as a weapon to justify further cuts in federal funds, pushing public universities down the road to privatization. The end result does not seem to be so dramatic. Public funding did grow significantly, and in the end evaluation was not seriously linked to funding decisions on resource allocation. However, a frenzy for evaluation did develop, revealing that in the government's view evaluation was a prime instrument for change. Since 1990, evaluation procedures were established at the following levels:

- Institutional self-evaluation was to be effected annually by each establishment, as a step toward producing a mission statement and a long term development strategy. Compliance was made a prerequisite in applying for project funding. In negotiations with the rectors' association (ANUIES) the Secretary for Higher Education accepted that the results of the self-evaluations would be made public by the institution if it so desired.[5]

- External review of academic programs at the undergraduate level are carried out by Peer Committees (Comités Interinstitucionales de Evaluación de la Educación Superior).[6]

- Individual evaluation of professors and researchers: for allocating individual performance bonuses to academics, institutions were required to develop criteria for evaluating performance in teaching. Unions are explicitly excluded from the process, and individual income from this source is not subject to collective bargaining and does not accrue toward pensions.[7] The struggle over how teaching should be assessed and who should control the process has created a new political dynamic

placing greater influence over the teaching profession in the hands of institutional managers, thus becoming the source of a constant and acrimonious debate between academics and rectors.

- Evaluation of graduate programs performed by CONACYT. Peer committees assess department's research productivity and teaching effectiveness. The results are used to formulate a list of *programs of excellence* which thereby become eligible for research grants, scholarships and other types of financial assistance. The impact of this procedure has not been insignificant, as funds for graduate programs can be obtained only through CONACYT. One effect has been the separation of policy for undergraduate studies from policy toward the graduate level, inducing universities to follow CONACYT criteria rather than creating graduate programs in the accostumed lax fashion (De Vries, 1997). Thus, in practice, this procedure operates as an accreditation mechanism.

- Entrance examinations for undergraduate studies. The traditional "open door" policy of public universities was displaced[8]. The College Entrance Examination Board was hired by several universities in the early 90's, and since then the Centro Nacional de Evaluación (CENEVAL), a non-governmental institution created by an ex-government official, has developed entrance examinations for upper secondary schools and higher education.[9] By late 1994, CENEVAL had administered examinations at 41 institutions in 19 states (CENEVAL, 1995). CENEVAL also worked with professional associations to establish *professional competency examinations* for graduates in some areas.[10]

- Institutional accreditation in the private sector. Several major private universities initiated an association of 60 private institutions (FIMPES) to design a local mechanism for accreditation.

It is fair to say that, for a higher education system that has never considered evaluation as part of its operating rules, these developments are important changes. But the picture is far from clear-cut.[11]

- Institutional self-evaluation has, for the most past, turned into a routine administrative procedure by which the rector makes a technical report to federal officials without involving faculty and administrators in actual evaluation exercises.

- An important ethical component of evaluation -- namely, transparency in institutional operations -- is missing, because in fact institutions are made accountable to the government but not to the public at large. Thus, civic participation in institutional reform is reduced to a minimum.

- There is emphatic, yet ambiguous, use of performance indicators, which are often confused with evidence of quality.

- Evaluation mostly focusses on the inputs of the system, whereas assessment of educational processes and outcomes are underplayed.

- The whole concept and meaning of quality has been timidly debated and elaborated. In practice, quality is construed as a uniform concept based on indicators, and evaluation procedures do not take into account the significant differences among types of institutions. Thus, a differentiated concept of quality appropriate for diverse institutional missions is missing (De Moura Castro & Levy, 1996).

Some of the principal elements of an evaluation system have been established, but implementation has proceeded timidly, leading to routinized practices and a compliance culture in many cases.

3. An assessment of the reforms: how far, how fast, how deep?

Basic political realignments have taken place. Opponents of the reforms have either been neutralized -- the case of unions and student federations -- or brought on board, as in the case of the rectors' association. However, one result of these realignments is the increased power of rectors and upper echelon administrators vis-a-vis academics. Professional organizations have increasing influence in some external evaluation and accreditation procedures.

Taboos have been broken: evaluation, conditional /competitive funding, charging fees and selling services are now common practices. The agenda has shifted: in public discourse the connection of higher education to the economy is front and center, quality also figures prominently, and private higher education is no longer viewed as the enemy. In the context of NAFTA, raising the quality of professional training in international terms has become an issue.

As for political stability underlying the reforms, there is a surprising degree of continuity: against the background of constant turnover in policy makers (five Secretaries for Higher Education and four Ministers of Education and two Presidents since 1989), policies have remained relatively stable throughout this period. Part of the explanation is the existence of new intermediate bodies that are not dependent on ministerial appointment or funding, such as CENEVAL, and others that are dependent on the Ministry but have in practice developed a relative degree of autonomy, such as the peer review committees. It is an interesting fact that increasing turbulence on the national political scene has not significantly affected univesity politics (except for opposition by students at UNAM to the raising of fees in 1992): this trend reverses the traditional scenario where university politics often became a detonator for political conflict at the regional or national level. Another fact that supports this trend is that federal funding levels for education have been kept relatively stable over the past five years, growing in real terms between 1989 and 1994. Although the 1995 budget suffered significantly because of the economic crisis, funding levels in 1996 show a trend toward recovery.

Thus, policy continuity in a context of political turbulence may be evidence of increased capacity for sustaining reforms and of the establishment of a specialized field of higher education policy. However, on the negative side, there seems to be a lack of coordination between the several agencies. It is not clear how the various evaluation procedures relate to each other and what their role is in the allocation of funds. Implementation is soft and haphazard. Goals are ambiguous. Policies are unevenly applied: some universities have experienced significant changes in their managment, financial and governance structures; others are going through very timid adjustments; and several public universities and teacher training institutions are veritable basket cases.[12] There is greater regulation by the state today, but more regulation does not necessarily entail greater state capacity to steer the system toward policy goals. This is especially true if policy making structures remain captured by client groups within the system, as is the case with the growing network of public technical institutes.

Has the incentive system changed? In many ways, it has, but the net effect of these changes is ambiguous. Additionally, inducing institutions toward reform by changing the incentive system may not be enough: steering institutional reform is a question of fine-tuning policies to specific organizational settings. Indeed, government inducement has let a thousand flowers bloom, but the results are very uneven. The days of automatic incremental funding are over, and institutions have to compete in a "surrogate market" for special funds. Most students in public universities are now paying some kind of fees, which changes the relationship of students to the institution. However, in the new power structure, where rectors have increased their influence considerably and evaluation is unevenly applied, the incentive to comply mechanically with government programs in order to obtain resources is often stronger than the incentive to raise quality more effectively. There are new rules, but they are not always clear or uniformly applied. This creates uncertainty and limits consensus.

Are institutions more externally accountable? They are more accountable to government but not to the public at large. Rectors are hardly subject to outside supervision. So, accountability in the Mexican case

has come to mean a bureaucratic rendering of accounts, not effective social accountability. If the clientelist structures still in place within many public universities and technical institutes is to be dismantled, institutions must be made more socially responsive.

Who defends quality? In postgraduate studies and research programs, the scientific community is certainly more active today in setting standards, although it leans heavily in the direction of the established exact sciences. Other than that, there are no well-defined non-governmental stakeholders interested in raising quality. Publicly available information on institutional effectiveness, on the quality of undergraduate programs and on the prospects in the job market for graduates is extremely scarce, thus limiting the range of student choice. Innovation in the curriculum and teaching has been a low priority and is for the most part dealt with mechanically by institutional leadership.

The challenge of equity. The recently published OECD Review of Mexican higher education pointed out its elitist focus, its structural inflexibility and the system's general lack of sensibility to the needs of students. This opinion surprised some Mexican readers, who expected the OECD to lean heavily toward the introduction of market responsiveness and technological development. In point of fact, the question of equity has been absent from the agenda of higher education since the terms "quality" and "relevance" became predominant in the 1980's, and the OECD Review showed that it's time to bring equity back into the picture. The emerging question is how to provide good quality education for greater numbers of students who will certainly come from more diverse social and cultural backgrounds, as secondary education expands in the coming years. The decision seems to have been made to push for institutional diversification away from the public university model and in the direction of greater enrollments in the two- and four-year technical institutes in regions distant from the main industrial urban centers. Implicit in this decision, additionally, is the option of growth through the private sector.

The encompassing question raised throughout this analysis is whether the higher education system in Mexico will take reform beyond governmental initiative and regulation toward institutional initiative and innovation. Returning to our questions about resolving difficult political issues and state capacity for reform in the educational system, what can be said about the current situation of higher education in Mexico? A second fase of policies seems to be necessary, in which the following issues are crucial:

One: After the introduction of evaluation, a second, more difficult, stage consists in translating outcomes into measurements, using evalaution as a tool to steer the system. The use of evaluation outcomes is a very political question, as yet not resolved in the Mexican case.

Two: The introduction of incentives surely triggers reactions, but a closer look should be taken at funding as a whole. If basic subsidies and salaries continue to be allocated according to traditional patterns, traditional ways of running the institution are allowed to persist, alongside the introduction of new forms of operation in some areas (such as research). Whereas the introduction of incentives as a complement to subsidies and salaries is an elegant form of "cheque book government" that avoids major conflict, any change in basic funding is likely to cause strong resistance.

Three: Even though this seems to be the era of the battle against bureaucracy, the existence of basic rules and regulations, as well as a transparent use of them, seem to be a *sine qua non* for reform. That is, the introduction of rational administration -- in the Weberian sense -- is necessary and far from being achieved. While incentives are rapidly introduced, the elaboration of rules and regulations requires long term political debates and ongoing adjustments within the system.

References

ANUIES, 1993, "Propuesta del Cuerpo Consultivo sobre el Examen Nacional Indicativo previo a la Licenciatura y el Examen General de Calidad Profesional", México.

Carothers, Thomas, 1997, "Democracy without Illusions", *Foreign Affairs*, Jan/Feb., 85-99.

CENEVAL, 1995, *Informe de Actividades*, México.

De Moura Castro, 1997, *Neoliberal Economists vs. Insistent Trainers Economists: Will Training survive the Battle?*, Interamerican Development Bank, Washington.

De Moura Castro, Claudio, and Daniel Levy, *Higher Education in Latin American and the Caribbean: a Strategy Paper*, IDB, Washington, 1996.

De Vries, Wietse, 1997, *Políticas federales y cambio institucional en la educación superior*, PhD Dissertation, Doctorado Interinstitucional en Educación, Universidad Autónoma de Aguascalientes, México, preliminary draft.

Dominguez, Jorge, 1997, "Latin America's Crisis of Representation", *Foreign Affairs*, Jan/Feb., 100-113.

Grindle, Merilee, 1996, *Challenging the State: Crisis and Innovation in Latin America and Africa*, Cambridge University Press.

Kent, R., 1996, *Higher Education Reform In Mexico: The Evolving Agenda In The 90's*, Seminar on Higher Education Reform in Latin America,The Woodrow Wilson International, Center for Scholars, Washington, D.C., November 5.

Kent, R., Didou, S., De Vries, W., 1996, "La política financiera del gobierno federal hacias las universidades públicas en México en los años 90", Proyecto Comparado de Políticas de Educación Superior en América Latina, Departamento de Investigaciones Educativas, México, draft.

Martínez, Felipe, Juan Fidel Zorrilla, Rollin Kent, 1996, *Los fines públicos de la educación superior: una agenda de discusión*, document presented to the round table discussions on reform in Mexican higher education in preparation for the symposium on "Higher Education in Latin America: the Challenges of the Market and Institutional Reform", Harvard, November 6-8. Unpublished manuscript.

Naím, Moisés, 1995, "Latin America: The Morning After", *Foreign Affairs*, Jan/Feb.

OECD, 1996, *Mexico: Review of Higher Education Policies*, Paris.

Puryear, Jeffrey, 1996, *Education in Latin America: Problems and Challenges*, New York, Council on Foreign Relations, Working Group on Educational Reform.

Notes

[1] Naim looks at the severe lessons of the Mexican collapse in an article with a cataclysmic title: "The Morning After" (1995); Carothers (1997) talks of "Democracy without Illusions" in reference to democratization processes in Latin America and other regions; Jorge Domínguez (1997) writes an article about "Latin America's *Fracasomania*", striking a cautionary note about the continuity of reforms; the Mexican press is full of pessimistic views on Mexico's future; *The Economist* (3/22/97) notes that "although the region has recovered from the Mexican peso crash of 1994-95 . . . with remarkable speed, there is a consensus among experts that the region requires a second wave of reforms . . . in particular, action is needed on education and savings."

[2] This section is taken from Kent (1996) and Kent, Didou, & De Vries, (1996).

[3] It must be pointed out, however, that first year enrollments for undergraduate studies have begun to grow once again in the mid-1990's.

[4]See *Programa de Desarrollo Educativo, 1995-2000*, Poder Ejecutivo Federal, México, 1996.

[5]Only one university has done so in five years: the University of Guadalajara.

[6] As of late 1995, peer reviews had been carried out at 28 public and 5 private universities, 9 technological institutes (public) and 4 departments of the National Polytechnical Institute (public). (Interview with Manuel Pérez Rocha, General Coordinator of Peer Review Committees, Oct. 1995)

[7]The precedent for this mechanism of "institutional bypassing" was the National System of Researches (SNI), set up by CONACYT in 1984 to provide extra income to scientists whose university salaries had plummeted. By the mid-1990's, six thousand researchers were SNI grantees, and the SNI had become a permanent fixture.

[8]In 1986 the National University's attempt to fix new entrance requirements unleashed a prolonged political conflict, which seems to have paralyzed UNAM's capacity for reform, but at the same time it focussed public attention on the need to effect changes in admissions at other public universities.

[9] Initially sponsored by the federal government, which funded it for the first year of operations, CENEVAL was designed to obtain subsequent income from the sale of assessment services to educational institutions. It competes with the CEEB and is beginning to set up assessment procedures in other countries (it has been hired by the Bolivian government to develop and entrance exam for Bolivian normal schools). CENEVAL designs and administers the exams, but the institutions define their own admissions policy on the basis of exam results: this means that there are national standards but differential admissions criteria.

[10]One objective is to establish standards for Mexican graduates that will be comparable to those of the United States and Canada. A series of tests for assessing minimum professional competence in graduates was introduced initially to the health professions, engineering, and law. (ANUIES 1993).

[11]The following is taken from Martínez, Zorrilla, y Kent, 1996.

[12] Such as Universidad Pedagógica Nacional, and the state universities of Oaxaca, Guerrero and Nayarit.